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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT INTRODUCES ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH NEW REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLOSION DEMOLITIONS AS PART OF EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN CITY OVERSIGHT AND ENSURE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

New framework to establish multi-department approval process; Measures ensure moratorium on explosives in demolition until new department rules are in place

CHICAGO - Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Buildings (DOB), together with Alderman George Cardenas, 12th Ward introduced an ordinance to establish a new regulatory framework for implosion demolitions in Chicago as part of a comprehensive effort to strengthen City oversight and further ensure extensive community engagement prior to this rare type of demolition activity. Based on national best practices, the proposed ordinance establishes a temporary moratorium on explosives in the demolition of buildings or other structures until City departments establish their own specific rules for an implosion permitting process. To ensure community members are a part of this process, residents will have an opportunity to provide input and recommendations on each department's proposed rules during a minimum 60-day public comment period.

"Our top priority is protecting the health and safety of residents in every community, and this is especially important where demolition-related activity is taking place," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This new ordinance ensures that, going forward, the use of explosives in demolition follows the strictest and most up-to-date rules and regulations for this rare and potentially hazardous activity, and that the community is notified and wholly engaged before any such action is approved."

Under the proposed ordinance, seven City departments, including the Departments of Buildings (DOB), Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), Fire (CFD), Public Health (CDPH), Transportation (CDOT), and Water Management (DWM) as well as the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), are required to draft new rules within the next 150 days that would regulate implosion demolitions taking place in the city. To ensure the public can weigh in, the drafted rules will be posted for public comment for at least 60 days, and each department has the option to hold a public hearing on their proposed rules.



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“We look forward to working with the community and industry partners to create a modern and progressive implosion regulation process that integrates the extensive policy research completed by our department in the past few months,” said DOB Commissioner Judy Frydland. “In doing so, we uphold our highest mission of protecting health and safety on construction sites, and in the surrounding communities, from start to finish.”

In addition to the public comment period, departments will also be required to prepare brief written responses to all public comments and will have the ability to modify their proposed rules based on the received feedback. Rules will take effect 10 days after each department submits its responses to public comment and the final rules to the Corporation Counsel for posting on the City’s website. The moratorium on explosives in demolition will be lifted only after all departments complete the rulemaking process required by the new ordinance.

“I applaud the Mayor for taking the necessary steps to ensure that residents, community-based organizations and advocates are a part of a process to build a stronger oversight framework for this rare type of demolition,” said Alderman George Cardenas, 12th Ward. “With this new ordinance, we are now putting it in writing that any company or organization looking to utilize an implosion demolition must first work together with the community area to ensure that all concerns are addressed, and all precautionary steps are taken.”

As part of the new multi-department regulation process, the City will now require all companies looking to conduct an implosion demolition to apply for a license from BACP. To obtain this license, the applicant will be required to take the following measures:

- **Create a comprehensive plan** to describe the use of explosives, including an overview of the entire project timeline and scope, and individual plans for security, transportation, operations, occupational health and safety, hazardous materials, dust mitigation, air quality monitoring, community notification, rodent abatement, emergency response and site cleanup. The use of explosives may not proceed unless each City department approves the comprehensive plan.
- **Post a written notice to the owners and occupants of all properties** located within 1,000 feet of the property where the planned demolition will occur and to the alderman of the ward in which the property is located. This notice must be mailed prior to filing a license application with BACP, and must describe the intended use of explosives, include the date, time, and location of the required public meeting, and provide an emergency contact phone number that will be continuously monitored by the applicant from the date of the notice until completion of the demolition. The OEMC Executive Director may require additional notices be sent closer to the implosion date.
- **Post a notice or sign at the site** where the demolition will occur, in a location visible and legible from the public way. The sign must be posted before a license



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application can be submitted to BACP, and must be at least 4-feet by 8-feet, with 6-inch lettering, describing the intended use of explosives, and include the date, time, and location of the required public meeting and an emergency contact phone number which will be continuously monitored by the applicant from the date of the notice until completion of the demolition. The sign must remain in place until the completion of the demolition.

- **Schedule a public meeting** to be hosted by and at the sole expense of the applicant, which will provide attendees at least two hours to ask questions on the details of the required comprehensive plan. Among other requirements, the public meeting must be held no less than 30 days and no more than 60 days after the application is submitted and at a location within 2 miles of the site where explosives will be used.
- **Convene a multi-department coordination meeting** led by OEMC for all relevant City departments to review the applicant's comprehensive plan. OEMC will also operate an incident command post on the date the demolition is scheduled to take place, and the City will be reimbursed for the direct and indirect costs related to the operation. OEMC will also establish requirements for the applicant to send additional communications to neighbors closer to the date of the event. OEMC will also have the authority to prevent the use of explosives if an applicant has failed to follow community notice requirements.

In addition to the license, the applicant will also need to verify they have applied for and received a public way obstruction permit, or a determination by the commissioner of CDOT that such a permit is not required; a water use permit and a demolition permit. The implosion activity must also comply with the Illinois Explosives Act and may not occur earlier than 90 days after the application is filed with BACP and 30 days after the public meeting hosted by the applicant.

On the date explosives will be used and prior to the use of explosives, applicants will also be required to submit to the incident command post a signed certification that all protective measures required under the approved comprehensive plan are in place and operational.

Today's proposed ordinance follows the City's rapid and aggressive response effort to hold Hilco Redevelopment Partners accountable for excessive dust caused by the implosion of a smokestack located on the grounds of the former Crawford Power Generating Station in April. Immediately following the demolition, Mayor Lightfoot implemented a six-month moratorium on implosion demolitions citywide, pending the creation of a specific implosion permitting process with updated guidelines.

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